

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 408

HE 014 286

AUTHOR Stover, Francis W.
TITLE Veterans Educational Assistance Program (GI Bill).
PUB DATE Apr 81
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Community and Junior Colleges (Washington, DC, April 1981).
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; *College Attendance; Declining Enrollment; Dropouts; Educational Background; Educational History; Eligibility; *Enrollment Trends; Federal Aid; Federal Legislation; *Federal Programs; Higher Education; High School Equivalency Programs; High School Graduates; *Student Financial Aid; *Veterans Education
IDENTIFIERS *G I Bill; Korean War; Veterans Administration; Vietnam Veterans; World War II

ABSTRACT

Information on the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (GI Bill) and other veterans' educational programs, participation rates, eligibility for educational assistance, and training trends is presented. More persons have trained in college than in any other type of training under the GI Bills; this is followed very closely by noncollege school training (including correspondence but not farm training). Participation in college level training is greater under the current program than under either the World War II or the Korean conflict programs. Through November 1980, a greater proportion of trainees under the current GI Bill had graduated from high school or passed the General Education Development (GED) test prior to entering training than had GI Bill trainees under either the World War II program or the Korean conflict program. However, peacetime post-Korean veterans trainees had a larger percentage who had completed one or more years of college. The most pronounced increases in training under the GI Bill occurred following increases in the financial assistance rate; however, beginning in April 1976, there has been a consistent downward trend in participation rates that has continued to the present. There is a special interest in training veterans who did not complete high school or obtain a GED certificate. In addition to the GI Bill, the Veterans Administration operates a Vocational Rehabilitation program for veterans who have incurred a service-connected disability, and another program for survivors and dependents of certain veterans. Information on the Veterans' Educational Assistance Act of 1981 (H.R. 1400) and other legislative options is included. (SW)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED207408

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Flower
Stover

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official NIE
position or policy.

Veterans Educational Assistance Program (GI Bill)

Educational and training assistance to facilitate a veteran's readjustment to civilian life has been part of American Law for over thirty-six years. Nearly 17.8 million veterans and service personnel have received educational assistance under three GI bills since June of 1944. This includes 7.8 million under the World War II GI bill, almost 2.4 million under the Korean conflict GI bill, and almost 7.6 million trainees under the current GI bill.

Education costs of the three GI bills through September 1980 total \$51 billion. Of this cost, \$14.5 billion is attributable to the World War II GI bill; \$4.5 billion to the Korean conflict GI bill, and \$32 billion to the current GI bill.

For the three GI bills combined, more persons have trained in college than in any other type of training. This is followed very closely by non-college school training (including correspondence but not farm training). As of the end of November 1980, 8,058,000 persons had trained in colleges or universities, compared with 6,868,000 who had trained in other schools. College level training has attracted the largest number of trainees under both the current GI bill and the Korean conflict GI bill while other school training was most prevalent under the World War II GI bill. A total of 2.2 million on-job trainees and 840,000 farm trainees account for the remainder of trainees under the three GI bills.

982410386
HE

Comparison of Vietnam Era Participation Rate with Earlier Participation Rates

At the end of 1980, 174 months since the current GI bill became effective, a total of 6,306,000 Vietnam era veterans and service personnel had taken training under the current program. As of this same date the Vietnam era veteran population had reached 9,671,000, including those with service between May 7, 1975, the official end of the Vietnam era, and January 1, 1977. This number of trainees, as a percentage of the population, gives a Vietnam era participation rate of 65 percent, compared with 50.5 percent for the World War II GI bill and 43.4 percent for the Korean conflict GI bill.

Participation in college level training is greater under the current program than under either the World War II or the Korean conflict programs. College participation for World War II veterans was 14.4 percent, for Korean conflict veterans it was 22.0 percent, and for all post-Korean conflict veterans and service personnel, it was 36.3 percent through November 1980. The subgroup Vietnam era veterans and service personnel have participated in college level training to a greater extent than any other group of veterans. They have a college participation rate of 47.7 percent.

Prior Educational Attainment

Through November 1980, a greater proportion of trainees under the current GI bill had graduated from high school or passed the GED (General Educational Development) test prior to entering training than had GI bill trainees under either the World War II program or the Korean conflict program. The percentage of trainees who had one or more years of college prior to GI bill training is higher for the current program than the percentage was under the World War II program; however, the percentage is lower than it was under the Korean conflict program.

Although Vietnam era veterans have had the largest percentage of trainees who had completed high school (or passed the GED test) prior to training, peacetime post-Korean veterans trainees had a larger percentage who had completed one or more years of college. This reflects the fact that many peacetime post-Korean veterans upgraded their education by going to college before the current GI bill became effective. As a result, a larger percentage of this group entered training under the current GI bill with a year or more of college (self-financed) than would have occurred if they had been eligible for such training at the time they were discharged from the Armed Forces.

Trends in Training

After the current GI bill went into effect on June 1, 1966, the fall and spring peak number of veterans and service personnel in training under chapter 34 increased for each successive November and April enrollment through November 1975. Beginning in April, 1976, these spring and fall figures showed a consistent downward trend that has continued to the present. In November 1966, the number in training was 294,000. By November 1975 the number of veterans and service personnel in training had reached the greatest number in training under the current GI bill (1,826,000). As of November 30, 1978, the number of persons in training under chapter 34 was 798,000. By November 30, 1980, this was 576,000. Although increases in the total in training occurred continuously through November 1975, the most pronounced increases in training occurred following increases in the financial assistance rate. The striking increase in training from November 1974 to April 1975 followed the 22.7 percent increase in the benefit level in the fall of 1974. The effect of this large benefit increase and to a lesser extent the effect of increased unemployment, particularly on educationally disadvantaged veterans, combined to cause this

large increase in training (15.7 percent) between November 1974 and April 1975. The three benefit increases that have taken place since then have not reversed the above-mentioned downward trend.

The initial decline in training from November 1975 to April 1976 occurred as the 10 year delimiting date of May 31, 1976 approached for 3.6 million veterans. The downward trend accelerated after this delimitating date had passed. Another factor which has led to the decline in training is that although the number of persons eligible to train has increased, the number of newly separated persons, who are most likely to train, has declined. This phenomenon has been observed for a number of years for groups of veterans separated in the various fiscal years; but, up until November 1975 this factor has been offset by enough new separatees and benefits increases to keep the numbers in training rising.

Educationally Disadvantaged Trainees

Under the current GI bill, veterans and service personnel who have neither completed 4 years of high school nor received credit for high school completion on the basis of a General Educational Development equivalency certificate, are considered to be educationally disadvantaged. Because of the deficiencies in the basic educational background of these individuals there is a special interest in their training under the GI bill.

There were 55,142 veterans in training on April 30, 1980 who were educationally disadvantaged at the time they entered training. This number was composed of 31,307 training in college; 15,000 in other residence schools; 5,703 in on-job training and 2,114 in correspondence training.

From April 1979 to April 1980, the number of educationally disadvantaged veterans in training decreased by 15.5 percent while the number of all other

veterans in training fell by 15.4 percent.

Eligibility and Entitlement to GI Bill Educational Assistance Benefits

For the most part, veterans who entered active duty service after January 31, 1955 and before January 1, 1977 may receive educational benefits, provided they meet the other eligibility criteria mentioned below. Veterans of the Vietnam era conflict must use their entitlement within 10 years from date of discharge or separation from the Armed Forces or by December 31, 1989, the date when the program will be ended, whichever is sooner.

The Vietnam era GI bill (P.L. 89-358) was enacted into law June 1, 1966. It was approved by the Congress to provide educational and vocational assistance to veterans who made a contribution to the national interest by service in the Armed Forces following the Korean conflict, including the Vietnam era conflict. Veterans who served on active duty for more than 180 continuous days, any part of which was after January 31, 1955, but before January 1, 1977 and who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable or who continue on active duty, are eligible. Those persons who served less than 181 days are eligible if their active duty was ended by a service-connected disability. Also eligible are persons who contracted with the Armed Forces and were enlisted in or were assigned to a reserve component under a DEP (Delayed Entry Program) or similar program and subsequently served on active duty for a continuous period of more than 180 days, any part of which occurred on or before January 1, 1978, and were discharged or released from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable. Veterans who have completed 18 or more continuous months of active duty in the Armed Forces are eligible for up to 45 months of fulltime schooling or on-the-job training.

Herewith are monthly rates which went into effect January 1, 1981 for the education and training programs available to veterans under the Vietnam era GI bill.

	No Dependents	One Dependent	Two Dependents	Each Additional Dependent
Institutional:				
Full Time	\$342	\$407	\$464	\$29
Three-Quarter Time	257	305	348	22
Half Time	171	204	232	15
Cooperative	276	323	367	21
Apprenticeship/OJT:				
1st 6 months	249	279	305	13
2nd 6 months	186	217	243	13
3rd 6 months	124	155	180	13
4th and any succeeding 6 months	62	92	119	13
Farm Cooperative:				
Full Time	276	323	367	21
Three-Quarter Time	207	242	275	16
Half Time	138	162	184	11
Active Duty, or Less Than Half Time	Tuition cost, not to exceed rate of \$342 for full time. \$257 for 3/4 time. \$171 for 1/2 time or less but more than 1/4 time, \$86 for 1/4 time or less.			
Correspondence	Entitlement charged at rate of 1 month for each \$342 paid.			
Flight	Entitlement charged at rate of 1 month for each \$317 paid.			

Other V.A. Educational Programs

In addition to the GI bill, the V.A. operates a Vocational Rehabilitation program for veterans who have incurred a service-connected disability, and

another program for survivors and dependents of certain veterans as follows:

* The VA Vocational Rehabilitation program (as amended by PL 96-466), is for service-disabled veterans who need rehabilitation services to achieve maximum independence in daily living, to become employable, and to obtain and maintain suitable employment. Under provisions which will become effective April 1, 1981, a veteran must be found to have an employment handicap and to be entitled to assistance. A veteran may be furnished up to 48 months (more under certain circumstances) of vocational rehabilitation services including training, improvement of potential for rehabilitation and other services. An additional period of employment assistance is also furnished. While receiving rehabilitation services the VA pays the cost of training and a monthly subsistence allowance. However, under certain circumstances the veteran can elect to receive payment at the Chapter 34 educational assistance rate and pay his or her own tuition and other school costs. Every disabled veteran is provided counseling services to develop a suitable program which will prepare him or her for employment in the veteran's occupational objective. Each veteran in a rehabilitation program receives continuing assistance from vocational rehabilitation specialists in carrying out the program.

* The Dependents Educational Assistance program serves survivors or dependents of those veterans who died from service-connected causes or whose service-connected disability is rated permanent and total. Spouses and children of service personnel who are missing in action or interned by a hostile foreign government for more than 90 days, are also eligible under this program. Up to 45 months of full-time training is provided in approved schools and on-job training programs. The monthly rates are the same as for the GI bill, except that no additional allowance is paid for dependents.

Post Vietnam Veterans Educational Assistance Program

For those persons who first entered the Armed Forces on active duty after December 31, 1976 and served for a period of more than 180 days, on or after January 1, 1977, there is available a voluntary, contributory matching educational assistance program. Service personnel may contribute from \$25 to \$100 a month to the Veterans Administration up to a limit of \$2700 over the person's military career. The VA will match the serviceperson's contributions with \$2 for each \$1 invested. The Department of Defense may contribute an additional unspecified amount.

A person may quit the program at the end of any 12 consecutive-month period, and those who quit may have their money returned. Entitlement to education benefits is limited to a maximum of 36 months or the number of months of participation, whichever is less. Participants in the program may pursue PREP (a pre-discharge program for disadvantaged veterans) in the last six months of their first enlistment. The program is administered by the VA under Title 38, U.S.C. as provided for other veterans' educational programs.

Veterans' Educational Assistance Act of 1981 (H.R. 1400)

H.R. 1400, the Veterans' Educational Assistance Act of 1981, proposes to establish a veterans' educational assistance program for certain individuals in the Armed Forces.

The purposes of this bill are: (1) to provide an education and training program to assist in the readjustment of veterans upon their discharge or separation from the Armed Forces; (2) to enhance the recruitment of quality personnel for the Armed Forces; (3) to encourage reenlistments for active duty service in the Armed Forces; and, (4) to facilitate the retention of key personnel in critical positions. It has been stated that this legislation may be the final attempt to "make the All-Volunteer Force work without breaking the bank," thus avoiding a return to conscription.

The concept of this legislation has virtually universal support from the uniformed military, veterans organizations, retired military organizations and educational institutions. Funding of the education and training programs is the primary area of disagreement, some feeling DOD should be responsible for all funding and others suggesting that the entire cost should be the responsibility of the Veterans' Administration. The cost of H.R. 1400 would be borne by both the VA and the Department of Defense. Because the program would be administered by the VA, the administrative cost of the program would continue with the Veterans' Administration. The VA would also bear the cost of the basic educational assistance payment. The costs of all other benefits provided by this bill would be borne by the Department of Defense.

There follows an outline of the major provisions of H.R. 1400 and a list of options which have been suggested to accomplish the same goals.

MAJOR PROVISIONS OF H.R. 1400

- I. Preservice Educational Assistance Program.
 - A. Limited to high school graduates or GED graduates
 - B. Individual agrees to perform specified period of obligated service on active duty or in Selected Reserve - receives 1 month of educational benefits for one month of active duty
 - C. Benefits paid for no more than 36 months at a rate no higher than \$300 per month
- II. Basic Educational Assistance
 - A. Limited to high school graduates or GED graduates
 - B. Requires 3 years of active duty or 2 years of active duty and 4 years in the reserves to qualify for maximum benefit
 - C. Maximum of 36 months of entitlement at \$250 per month
- III. Supplemental Educational Assistance
 - A. Requires the individual to be qualified for the basic educational assistance and to serve an additional 3 years of active duty or 2 years of active duty and 4 years in the reserves to qualify
 - B. Maximum of 36 months of entitlement at \$300 per month paid in addition to the basic payment of \$250 per month = \$550 per month
 - C. Rate may be "kicked up" by DOD for critical specialties
- IV. Transfer of Entitlement to Dependents
 - A. Eligible service member must have completed 8-12 years of service
 - B. Restricted to those with "critical skills"
 - C. May be transferred to 1 or more dependents
 - D. Eligible service member must continue on active duty or be retired after 20 years when dependent utilizes these benefits
- V. Provides for a 2 year extension of the pilot Department of Defense Educational Loan Repayment Plan
- VI. Effective date of the bill is October 1, 1981

OPTIONS

- I. Extend VEAP (Veterans Educational Assistance Program) - a contributory program
- II. Reinstitute GI Bill (same as that for Vietnam Era veterans) - non-contributory, unrestricted, single benefit
- III. Amendments to H.R. 1400
 - A. Increase basic monthly stipend
 - B. Provide unrestricted transferability after designated term of service
 - C. Make transferability program a contributory program
 - D. Provide educational leave of absence program
 - E. Provide tuition assistance in addition to basic monthly stipend
 - F. Authorize DOD to provide additional assistance ("kicker") to those receiving basic benefit
- IV. Enact no legislation - non-contributory educational assistance benefit inappropriate for All-Volunteer force